

Show of Hands

Fairfax County Public Library Volunteer Newsletter



Spring 2006

Star Power

The Fairfax County Public Library Board of Trustees honored 45 individuals and four community service partners at its annual Star Volunteer Awards ceremony on April 12 at the George Mason Regional Library.

Del. Mark Sickles returned as emcee for the evening with his characteristic wit, charm and enthusiasm for unwrapping honorees' gifts. "I gotta see what's in here," he told one 5,000-hour volunteer as he helped her unwrap a pair of engraved bookends. Sickles, who once served on the library's Board of Trustees, was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 2003. He drove up from Richmond specifically for the event.

Honorees began the evening with coffee and homemade cake baked by Joan Bissell, circulation manager at the Reston Regional Library. Then, Board Chair Stephanie Abbott opened the ceremony with special presentations to community service partner teams from Datatel, Inc., ExxonMobil, the Fairfax County Office of Partnerships and Inova Health System.

Datatel employees volunteered at library branch book sales during the company's annual Community Day and the firm also donated funds to support an outreach program. ExxonMobil was honored for its financial support for various library programs.

The county's Office of Partnerships helped set up tax assistance for low-income individuals in library branches. Inova Health System earned an award for its seven-year collaboration with the library to bring together the worlds of information, health and literature through a variety of programs.

Among special volunteers honored for length of service milestones were Anita Lamkin, who has donated over 5,000 hours as the coordinator of the Concerts at the Alden classical music series, as well as Lois Price, Sheila Sheehan and Charles Chaplin, who also have contributed more than 5,000 hours at their respective branches.

Exceptional service volunteers were also recognized for outstanding projects. Among them was 90-year-old



Star Volunteer emcee Mark Sickles helps Access Services volunteer, Wellington Machmer, a.k.a., "Mr. Mac", unwrap his Exceptional Service Award gift.

photo: DeAnn Jelinek

Wellington Machmer, known as "Mr. Mac" at the Access Services branch where he repairs cassettes for the Talking Book program of the Library of Congress. Mr. Mac drives 22 miles each way from his Alexandria home to the Government Center on the days he volunteers. Another, Kim Dare, created a database of 230 publishing contacts for the committee that reviews books for a column in *School Library Journal*. Another technology volunteer, John Patton, was honored for his committed service since he began volunteering as a teen in 1997. Now three years out of college, Patton continues to tutor others in Microsoft Office products.

Volunteers enjoyed the evening as well. "This is the first time since college that I've gotten credit for reading," said Virginia Harris, who runs a book group at the Thomas Jefferson Library.

"You are valued ambassadors to the community, as well as giving generously of your time," Board Chair Stephanie Abbott told the assembled group as she thanked volunteers for contributions to the library.



photo: DeAnn Jelinek

Chantilly Regional Library volunteer coordinators Jill Freeman and Afaf Guttri pose with the branch's Star Volunteers Jill Johnson, John Patton and Robert McKenna.

Community Service Partner Awards

Datatel, Inc.:
DeAnn Jelinek

ExxonMobil:
Judy Hubka

Inova Health System:
Elita Christiansen

Fairfax County Office of Partnerships:
Tom Meagher and Emily Bryant

Star Volunteer Honorees

Access Services:

Wellington Machmer, Exceptional Service.

Library Administration:

Mike Kogan, 1,000+ hours; Anita Lamkin, 5,000+ hours.

Chantilly Regional Library:

Barbara Hoge, 1,000+ hours; Robert McKenna, 3,000+ hours; Dave Price, 1,000+ hours; Lois Price, 5,000+ hours; Kim Dare, Exceptional Service; Jill Johnson, Exceptional Service; John Patton, Exceptional Service.

Fairfax City Regional Library:

Punch Jackson, 1,000+ hours; Vera Bradley, 1,000+ hours; Carol Smiley, 3,000+ hours; Ann Garson, Exceptional Service.

Great Falls Library:

Anita New, 1,000+ hours; Ernest Dane, 1,000+ hours; Kurt Cylke, Exceptional Service.

Kings Park Library:

Nancy Baldwin, 1,000+ hours; Howard Lasser, 1,000+ hours; Ruth Sine, 1,000+ hours; Art Gauvain, 3,000+ hours.

Martha Washington Library:

Elizabeth Mark, Exceptional Service.

Patrick Henry Library:

Carol Cuddihy, 1,000+ hours; Waller McNew, 3,000+ hours; Nancy Christmus, Exceptional Service.

Pohick Regional Library:

Carolyn Arnold, 1,000+ hours; Bruce Birnberg, 1,000+ hours; Gert Gregorio, 1,000+ hours; Joe Niedbala, 1,000+ hours.

Reston Regional Library:

Vickie Rea, 1,000+ hours; Charly Karlsson, 3,000+ hours; Pamela Chin, Exceptional Service; Nan Rainey, Exceptional Service; Kelley Westenhoff, Exceptional Service.

Sherwood Regional Library:

Christine Haley, Exceptional Service; Agda Cohen, 1,000+ hours; Janet Jacobi, 1,000+ hours; Larry Ledebur, 1,000+ hours; Sheila Sheehan, 5,000+ hours.

Thomas Jefferson Library:

Barbara Costello, 1,000+ hours; Loretta Harris, 1,000+ hours; Virginia Harris, 1,000+ hours.

Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library:

Betty Kerley, 1,000+ hours; Charles Chaplin, 5,000+ hours.

Woodrow Wilson Library:

Carmen Alejandro, Exceptional Service

Apply for a Friends Scholarship



Volunteers may qualify for a scholarship ranging from \$150 to \$750 through the Friends Scholarship Fund. Simply complete a one-page application and have it postmarked or delivered by June 15, 2006. The scholarships support the continuing education of volunteers and staff within the Fairfax County Public Library. They support training that occurs six months before or after the deadline. Applications will also be accepted December 15, 2006.

For more information and forms, please visit the foundation's Web site at www.FCPLfoundation.org. You can also contact the foundation by phone at 703-324-8300 or e-mail at info@FCPLfoundation.org.

Two For One

It's quite a bargain for library staff — an elite corps of volunteers who refuse to restrict their activities to one location. Some are former library staff, others are retired, but all enjoy spending time in the library environment.

Mike Kogan, a retired aerospace engineer, splits his time between the Patrick Henry Library and Library Administration. He began volunteering as an Internet tutor at Patrick Henry in 2001 and was recruited soon after for the library's Grants Office, where he has researched grants to support the library's Motherhead®/Fatherhead® outreach program. "I really enjoy the lovely people I work with. It's a good experience that I look forward to each week." He was honored for 1,000 hours of service at the recent Star Volunteer Awards.



photo: John Goodyear

Jean Burris couldn't stay away after she retired in 1997. She keeps skills sharp at Library Administration and the George Mason Regional Library.

Volunteer Jean Burris worked for the library's Public Information Office for 14 years. Since she retired in 1997, she returns weekly to

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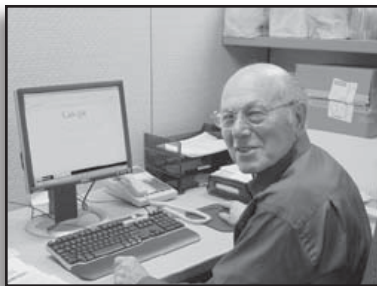
Lorrie Bennett

John Goodyear

Library Administration to keep up the volunteer database and help with other clerical tasks. She also helps check in the book drop at the George Mason Regional Library on Wednesday mornings. "I wanted to keep up my skills and this seemed a good way to do it," she says. "I like to keep myself scheduled so I don't get lazy."

After her father's death, Alka Mathur found herself with some extra time. She now helps English language learners at the Richard Byrd Library, but also volunteers at the Pohick Regional Library, where her father enjoyed going. "It's great to keep busy and the people are nice," she says of her dual volunteer positions.

Recent retiree Nancy Richards, who worked for the library for 16 years, most recently at the Dolley



Retired aerospace engineer Mike Kogan splits his time between Library Administration and the Patrick Henry Library.

photo: John Goodyear

Madison Library, returns there to keep in touch with former co-workers. She also helps out at the circulation desk at the Martha Washington Library, in her neighborhood. "I still love libraries and all the positive aspects of public service they represent," she says of her volunteering.

Book mender

Nancy Baldwin shares her expertise at both the Kings Park Library and George Mason Regional Library.

At the recent Star Volunteer Awards, she was honored for 1,000 hours of service and for preserving

books whose replacement value would have exceeded \$10,000. "I bet you didn't know how valuable you were," Del. Mark Sickles, the emcee said.

The library appreciates each for time shared across library branches and departments. Thanks for doing double duty!



photo: Jerry Herrera

Alka Mathur keeps busy helping English language learners at the Richard Byrd Library and shelving books at the Pohick Regional Library.

Clara Yuan: Making the Complex Simple

Las Vegas is not the only home of "fear and loathing" – the phrase Rolling Stone writer Hunter Thompson coined in his well-known memoir. For many, thoughts of dealing with Microsoft products Excel, Word and Access can also produce such emotions. If only everyone could relieve such fears as well as volunteer Clara Yuan did last fall.

Clara, a Cornell University student, interned at the Lorton Library in the fall of 2005. Staff at Lorton tried to brainstorm ways to keep her from returning to college life in Ithaca, N.Y. – hoping the mild weather in Virginia would attract her. She did unfortunately return to academia, but hopefully will come back.

Clara seemed to make all things possible. For example, when Denise Morgan, Lorton's branch man-



Clara Yuan, a volunteer intern from Cornell University, conquered Microsoft programs such as Access to help the Lorton Library run smoothly last fall.

photo: John Goodyear

ager, left her some materials about the history of the Lorton area and asked if she could prepare an index, Clara enthusiastically took on the project.

When Denise asked her about preparing a database using Access software, Clara responded, "I don't know much about Access – yet." Then she set to work to learn the software and prepare the form that solicited the reports Denise requested.

When the management team asked for help to improve the master schedule forms done in Excel, Clara said, "Tell me what you would like it to do and I'll learn how to do it." Then she made it happen. Clara calls this "a sweet zone of surmountable challenge."

Finally, during those times when we had no computer available for use or we had a pressing need to weed our shelves, Clara tapped the expertise acquired from her several years of library volunteering to help with the more traditional tasks of maintaining our excellent library. Lorton can only hope that Clara will decide to come back often!

- Denise Morgan, Lorton Library

Volunteer Opportunities

The Fairfax County Public Library is recruiting volunteers. Please help the agency advertise its opportunities by clipping this list and sharing it with friends, family, neighbors, coworkers, workplace volunteer programs, schools, clubs or houses of worship – wherever someone may be able to help.

Summer 2006

Deliver pre-selected books to homebound customers once a month for Access Services (Fairfax County Government Center, Fairfax). Requires good knowledge of books, access to car and ability to lift bags of books. Access Services also needs volunteers with computer skills to check books in and out during weekday daytime hours. Adults. Beena.Pandey@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-324-8380.

Scan community newspapers for articles about the Fairfax County Public Library at Library Administration (Fairfax County Government Center, Fairfax), weekday daytime hours. Two to three hours per week. Adults. Kay.Garrison@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-324-8305.

Work behind the scenes and volunteer with the library's Interlibrary Loan Office. Help open incoming packages, filing, general office duties. Hours/days flexible, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. M-F. Four-month commitment. Technical Operations at the Chantilly Regional Library. Susan.Bleistein@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-222-3124.

Help process gift books at the Fairfax City Regional Library. Add gift book copies to the library's database and cover hardback books. Training provided. Ideal qualifications: Library experience and computer skills. Must be available for at least a year. Adults. Pam.Johnson@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-293-6227.

"Weeders and Readers" are needed to help with gardening and landscaping projects at the Pohick Regional Library (Burke) on Tuesday mornings. Contact Karen Knopes at 703-690-2039.

Master Gardener to work with "weeders and readers" at the Pohick Regional Library to coordinate planting, landscaping and maintenance of library grounds. Contact Karen Knopes at 703-690-2039.

Adopt the Library Grounds at the Pohick Regional Library to keep the area free of litter and debris. Contact Gari Plehal at 703-644-7333, ext. 206.

Offer computer instruction at the Richard Byrd Library (Springfield). Adults. Jerry.Herrera@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-451-8055.

Teach MS Office Suite at the George Mason Regional Library. Adults. Nancy.Ehlke@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-256-3800.

Many branches also seek volunteers to organize shelves (ages 12 and up, or as a family); help the children's department by preparing program materials (ages 14 and up); check in books (adults); or, with MLS degree, provide support for the information department in providing reference service.

Training is available for all positions. For information, contact Kate.Wanderer@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-324-8332.

To visit the volunteer section of the library's Web site, or to apply online, go to the library's Web site:

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library. Click on "Do You Know...You Can Volunteer at the Library?"



Show of Hands is published by the Fairfax County Public Library, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 324, Fairfax, VA 22035, 703-324-3100. Contact the Director of Volunteer Programs, Kate Wanderer, at 703-324-8332 or kate.wanderer@fairfaxcounty.gov. Visit the library's Web site at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library



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♿ Reasonable accommodations will be made upon request. Call 703-324-8380 or TTY 703-324-8365.

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